

State of Michigan  
Senate Judiciary Committee

Re: SB 319

Date : Sept 17, 2013

Hello my name is Jody Robinson , some of you may recognize me and already know who I am and why I feel I should be here today. But for those who may not, quickly... I am the sister and voice for my beloved big brother Jimmy Cotaling who was a victim of a brutal murder by a juvenile. I have been actively involved in this issue since it's onset back in 2006, And even traveled to Washington DC to attend the Federal Supreme Court Case of *Miller v Alabama*, as the organization I co-founded filed an Amicus brief in that case. I am well aware that the "*Miller*" decision has left all of us with a great deal to work through. But I am very proud to be able to stand here today for the First time in 8 years and say I am in support of SB 319 as written and its proposed reforms to our Juvenile Sentencing Guidelines.

SB 319 I feel has the best interest of all parties considered. It complies with and answers the questions of the *Miller v Alabama* decision. It allows for individualized sentencing while also handing out an appropriate sentence which serves to protect society, punish the offender and minimize the re-victimization of the victims' families. I feel this bill is in line with current sentencing schemes, as it takes into account the very real fact that Murder in the First degree is the worst crime one can commit well also taking into account the juvenile status of these offenders.

I know there has been a lot of discussion around the issue of retroactivity and I truly support the trigger that has been placed in this bill to answer that question. I feel that it sends a clear message that we value and respect our judicial system and the legal finality that must accompany it. I must also say that although I do not believe the Federal Supreme Court will ever rule to apply *Miller* retroactively, this trigger gives me a sense of relief that one day, if they ever did rule retroactivity would apply, I will not have to be back here attending hearings, reliving yet again my brother murder as we hash out how to handle retroactivity, It is spelled out and would be ready to be applied if ever called for.

In the best interest of everyone concerned from the Victims to the offenders and everyone in between this issue needs to be resolved. The constant re-traumatization for victims and the constant unknown for the offenders is not healthy for either party. I urge you all to vote Yes on SB 319.

Sincerely,

Jody Robinson  
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